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Security Council

Fifty-second Year

Provisional

3791st Meeting

Thursday, 19 June 1997, 12.45 p.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Lavrov	(Russian Federation)
Members:	Chile	Mr. Somavía
	China	Mr. Wang Xuexian
	Costa Rica	Mr. Sáenz Biolley
	Egypt	Mr. Awaad
	France	Mr. Dejammet
	Guinea-Bissau	Mr. Lopes da Rosa
	Japan	Mr. Owada
	Kenya	Mr. Mahugu
	Poland	Ms. Gospodarczyk
	Portugal	Mr. Soares
	Republic of Korea	Mr. Park
	Sweden	Mr. Osvald
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Gomersall
	United States of America	Mr. Richardson

Agenda

The situation in Albania

Letter dated 14 June 1997 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/1997/460)

Letter dated 16 June 1997 from the Permanent Representative of Albania to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/1997/464)

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The meeting was called to order at 12.45 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Albania

Letter dated 14 June 1997 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/1997/460)

Letter dated 16 June 1997 from the Permanent Representative of Albania to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/1997/464)

The President (*interpretation from Russian*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Albania, Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Romania, Spain, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Kulla (Albania) took a seat at the Council table; Mr. Sucharipa (Austria), Mr. Reyn (Belgium), Mr. Truelsen (Denmark), Mr. Orpana (Finland), Mr. Reichel (Germany), Mr. Zacharakis (Greece), Mr. Hoey (Ireland), Mr. Fulci (Italy), Mr. Wolzfeld (Luxembourg), Mrs. Van Daalen (Netherlands), Mr. Gorita (Romania), Mr. Laclaustra (Spain), Mr. Džundev (the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia) and Mr. Çelem (Turkey) took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President (*interpretation from Russian*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them the letter dated 14 June 1997 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council, document S/1997/460, and the letter dated 16 June 1997 from the Permanent Representative of Albania to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council, document S/1997/464.

Members of the Council also have before them document S/1997/472, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by Albania, Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, the Republic of Korea, Romania, Spain, Sweden, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America.

I should like to draw the attention of the members of the Council to document S/1997/471, which contains the text of a letter dated 17 June 1997 from the Chargé d'affaires *ad interim* of the Permanent Mission of Denmark to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General.

The first speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Albania, to whom I give the floor.

Mr. Kulla (Albania): Allow me first to thank you, Sir, for your competent guidance of the proceedings of the Security Council during this month and to congratulate your predecessor, His Excellency Ambassador Park of the Republic of Korea, on his presidency last month.

On behalf of the Albanian Government, I should like to express my appreciation to the members of the Security Council for their prompt and effective reaction to the situation in Albania through resolution 1101 (1997) and for the attention they have given to the periodic reports of the Steering Committee. Our thanks go also to the Secretary-General for his valuable contribution to this issue.

At the same time, my Government and people are grateful to the coalition of the willing for the creation of the Multinational Protection Force headed by Italy. The Multinational Protection Force, in cooperation with the Albanian authorities, has been successful in improving the situation in my country. The Albanian people are in the process of taking important decisions for the stability and the future of the country through parliamentary elections.

With this in mind, I invite the members of the Council to vote in favour of the present draft resolution, which would authorize the Multinational Protection Force to further help in the normalization of the situation in Albania.

The President (*interpretation from Russian*): I thank the representative of Albania for the kind words he addressed to me.

The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Italy. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Fulci (Italy): The unity of intent and action of the international community in facing the Albanian crisis has been, in our opinion, exemplary. That is what made it possible to contain a rapidly deteriorating situation that could have threatened the long-term stability of the country. By taking quick and effective action, the international community also prevented a dangerous spill-over into neighbouring countries.

To get an idea of how difficult a task this was, consider the number of bodies involved: the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the European Union, the Department of Humanitarians Affairs of the United Nations and the Western European Union. Under its then President, Ambassador Wlosowicz of Poland, the Security Council approved resolution 1101 (1997) in record time, on 28 March, only one day after it had been submitted. Thanks to this swift action, 11 European countries — Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Greece, Italy, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Spain and Turkey — established the force led by Italy. In a matter of days — I repeat, days, not weeks — this force was deployed on Albanian territory, in the framework of a peace operation code-named "Alba".

The mandate contained in the original resolution expires on 28 June. The new draft resolution before the Council accepts the request that the mandate be extended for another six weeks. In so doing, the draft resolution also rightly underlines the fact that the mandate of the force has been carried out and implemented, in close cooperation with the Albanian authorities, in a neutral and impartial way and, I would add, with the utmost precision. The multinational protection force has conformed in every respect and detail to the dispositions contained in resolution 1101 (1997). Six comprehensive and detailed bi-monthly reports were punctually submitted to the Council and examined by it.

Thanks to the multinational contingent's constant presence and patrolling activity throughout almost all of Albania, the force has had the greatest possible visibility and mobility. These two elements were crucial to achieving the goals contained in the mandate: in humanitarian terms, the return to a situation of normalcy; in security terms, first, as I said earlier, the containment of a rapidly deteriorating situation, and secondly, a steady, gradual return to law and order, allowing international organizations to carry on their operations in Albania.

The multinational protection force has been a constant and highly visible point of reference for Albanian institutions and for all the citizens of Albania, helping to restore a climate of greater trust. Judging from other crisis areas where the international community was unable to respond with equal speed and determination, it is not hard to imagine what the Albanian situation might have been today if the Council and the force had not promptly intervened.

For Italy, Operation Alba represented an extraordinary commitment of men and resources. Our leadership of a force of 6,115 men, our contingents in other parts of the Balkans, and the initiatives that my country supported and will continue to support are testimony to our commitment to both the security of a nation with whom we have ties of friendship and history, and the stability of the entire region.

Operation Alba will hopefully be concluded in six weeks. We welcome the OSCE's decision of yesterday, 18 June, to support the Albanian decision to hold new parliamentary elections on 29 June. We are confident that these elections will be a crucial step on the road out of the Albanian crisis and towards a period of rehabilitation and reconstruction. In short, it will be the Albanian people's first step towards taking charge, once again, of their own destiny.

Of course, the achievement of this goal will not mean the end of either the economic emergency or the need for a sustained international commitment in Albania. The country will still be faced with a number of economic, financial and social difficulties that will need to be addressed in order to put the country safely back on the road to peace, development and progress.

A preparatory meeting for a donor conference took place in Rome on 26 May, under the chairmanship of the Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lamberto Dini. A

ministerial conference will be convened, again in Rome, after the Albanian elections to assess the progress in Albania and provide guidance for future international action. Needless to say, this will have to include the mobilization of resources from the donor community and close coordination between the donors, the international financial institutions and the Albanian authorities.

The key to effectiveness and early response in this crisis has been intense and in-depth consultation and coordination. The initial decision to create a Steering Committee in Rome, in which all the countries contributing to the force and the international organizations involved could interact and make common decisions in real time, once a week, was a tool contributing to the success of the entire operation. We believe it provides an example to be followed for similar occurrences in the future.

I conclude, Mr. President, by expressing my warmest thanks to you personally and to all the members of the Council for the positive and swift decisions made both on 28 March and today, proving how effective this body can be in promoting peace and stability in the world, in line with the noble principles and ideals envisioned in the Charter. I also wish to thank in particular the Permanent Representative of France, Ambassador Alain Dejammet, for having so ably and so eloquently presented to the Security Council the views and the needs of the countries participating in the multinational protection force. I also wish to commend the actions of the Permanent Representative of Albania, Ambassador Kulla, who has worked tirelessly in and around this Chamber to alleviate the plight of his country in these trying times.

Needless to say, I express the sincere thanks of the Government and people of Italy to all the countries that have joined in this action of good will, and to all their soldiers on the ground. Without the soldiers and their daily commitment and sacrifice, the concept of international solidarity in emergencies such as this would remain empty words.

The President (*interpretation from Russian*): I thank the representative of Italy for the kind words he addressed to me and to the members of the Council.

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. Unless I hear any objection, I shall put the draft resolution to the vote.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I shall first give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements before the voting.

Mr. Wang Xuexian (China) (*interpretation from Chinese*): The Charter of the United Nations clearly stipulates that the United Nations should not interfere in what are essentially the internal affairs of a State. In our view, the question of Albania is in essence an Albanian internal affair. Therefore, the Security Council should proceed with caution.

We are not in favour of authorizing the deployment in Albania of the multinational protection force. We are even less in favour of expanding the force's mandate. Moreover, we feel that, as the situation in Albania improves, the multinational protection force should terminate its mandate at an appropriate time.

The understanding of the Chinese delegation is that the deployment of the multinational protection force in Albania is a special measure taken under special circumstances. Taking into account the relevant request of the Albanian Government for the extension of the force's mandate, the Chinese delegation will not stand in the way of the adoption of the draft resolution. However, I wish to stress that safeguarding the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter is in the fundamental and long-term interests of the countries of the world.

In the long run, the question of Albania can be resolved only by the Albanian people themselves. We sincerely hope that the Government and people of Albania will make joint efforts to ensure that peace and stability return to their country as soon as possible.

The President (*interpretation from Russian*): I shall now put to the vote the draft resolution in document S/1997/472.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Chile, Costa Rica, Egypt, France, Guinea-Bissau, Japan, Kenya, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Sweden, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

Against:

None

Abstaining:
China

The President (*interpretation from Russian*): The result of the voting is as follows: 14 votes in favour, none against and one abstaining. The draft resolution has been adopted as resolution 1114 (1997).

There are no further speakers inscribed on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.